

Message Text

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70

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-07 L-02

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, MILI, SZ

SUBJECT: PRESS COVERAGE OF AMBASSADOR-DESIGNATE DOMINICK'S
ALLEGED STATEMENTS

REF: BERN 649

1. FEDERAL COUNCIL'S STATEMENT ON AMBASSADOR-DESIGNATE DOMINICK
(REFTEL) HAS BEEN WIDELY CARRIED ON TV, RADIO, AND IN THE PRESS.
STATEMENT HAS BEEN INTERPRETED AS EFFORT TO PUT TO REST
SPECULATIONS ABOUT THE AMBASSADOR-DESIGNATE.

2. FEB 13 PRESS, HOWEVER, HAS AGAIN WRITTEN EXTENSIVELY
ON AMBASSADOR-DESIGNATE. COVERAGE OF THE STORY HAS VARIED
WIDELY WITH SOME PAPERS HARDLY MENTIONING IT, WHILE OTHERS
HAVE MALICIOUSLY SOUGHT TO EMBELLISH VARIOUS ASPECTS OF IT.
JOURNAL DE GENEVA FOR EXAMPLE, GAVE ONLY VERY BRIEF FACTUAL ACCOUNT OF

AMBASSADOR-DESIGNATE'S SENATE TESTIMONY.

3. NEUE ZURCHER ZEITUNG IN COMMENTARY FROM BERN
STATED THAT AMBASSADOR-DESIGNATE DOMINICK'S START HAD NOT BEEN
AUSPICIOUS. IT SAID THAT FEDERAL COUNCIL'S STATEMENT
LEFT "A FEELING OF UNEASINESS." ARTICLE CONTINUED THAT
"IT IS STRANGE THAT A POLITICIAN WHO PLANS TO ASSUME A
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DIPLOMATIC POST UNCONCERNEDLY ENCUMBERS HIS FUTURE HOST-

COUNTRY WITH A STATEMENT WHICH IS TOTALLY CONTRARY TO ITS NEUTRALITY POLICY. ONE SHOULD BE ABLE TO TAKE A MINIMAL KNOWLEDGE OF THE POLITICAL FACTS FOR GRANTED. IT SHOULD ALSO NOT BE UNKNOWN TO THE FORMER SENATOR FROM COLORADO THAT U.S. SUPPLY TO THE MIDDLE EAST, ESPECIALLY DURING THE LAST ARAB/ISRAELI CONFLICT, CREATED HIGHLY NEURALGIC PROBLEMS FOR VARIOUS WESTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES. IT WOULD BE EVEN MORE ASTONISHING IF SENATOR DOMINICK WAS INFLUENCED BY THE WISHES OF PENTAGON PLANNERS." REST OF ARTICLE DEVOTED TO SWISS NEUTRALITY AND MILITARY OVERFLIGHT POLICY.

4. TRIBUNE DE GENEVE AND TAGESANZEIGER (ZURICH) HAVE BEEN AMONG THE LEADERS OF THE ASSAULT ON AMBASSADOR-DESIGNATE. TODAY'S STORY IN BOTH PAPERS MADE REFERENCE TO THE AMBASSADOR-DESIGNATE'S SAYING HE HAD WISHED TO REFER ONLY TO "UNARMED PLANES" AND COMPLAINED THAT THIS DID NOT ADEQUATELY CLARIFY THE SITUATION. TRIBUNE DE GENEVE EDITORIAL TOOK EXCEPTION TO AMBASSADOR-DESIGNATE'S ALLEGED EARLIER STATEMENT ABOUT SWISS NEUTRALITY LEANING TOWARD THE U.S. AND SAID HIS ARRIVAL IN BERN WOULD BE MET BY SOME "UNEASINESS." LUCERN NEUESTE NACHRICHTEN CARRIED AN UNFRIENDLY AP STORY REFERRING TO SENATOR DOMINICK'S ALLEGED STATEMENTS DURING CONFIRMATION HEARING. THE STORY ALSO CARRIED FPD STATEMENT THAT OVERFLIGHT OF "UNARMED AIRCRAFT" IS REGULATED BY INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENT AND NOT SUBJECT TO BILATERAL RELATIONS. PAPER ALSO REPLAYED SOME NEGATIVE COMMENTS FROM OTHER NEWSPAPERS.

5. 24 HEURES LAUSANNE, WHICH HAD PROBABLY BEEN MOST CAUSTIC CRITIC, TODAY ONLY CARRIED FEDERAL COUNCIL STATEMENT UNDER HEADING "FEDERAL COUNCIL CONSIDERS ITSELF SATISFIED." BERNER TAGBLATT HAD ONLY VERY BRIEF STORY BUT ASKED WHETHER DOMINICK WAS THE APPROPRIATE CHOICE FOR AMBASSADORSHIP.

6. THERE WAS SOME MENTION OF AMB-DESIGNATE'S REFERENCES TO SWISS MEMBERSHIP IN IMF AND UN, AND SOME CRITICISM TO EFFECT THAT AS ONE WHO HAD RECOMMENDED US LEAVE UN HE WAS NOT QUALIFIED TO RECOMMEND TO SWISS THEY GET IN.
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